

or a combination of the following alternatives:

(1) Assign the employee to duties where the Department determines the employee is no longer a threat to safety, the Department's mission, or Government property;

(2) Allow the employee to take leave, or place him or her in an appropriate leave status (annual leave, sick leave, or leave without pay) or absence without leave if the employee has absented himself or herself from the worksite without approved leave; or

(3) Place the employee in a paid, non-duty status for such time as is necessary to effect the action.

§9701.610 Opportunity to reply.

(a) The Department must give employees at least 10 days, which must run concurrently with the notice period, to reply orally and/or in writing to a notice of proposed adverse action. However, if there is reasonable cause to believe the employee has committed a crime for which a sentence of imprisonment may be imposed, the Department must give the employee at least 5 days, which must run concurrently with the notice period, to reply orally and/or in writing.

(b) The opportunity to reply orally does not include the right to a formal hearing with examination of witnesses.

(c) During the opportunity to reply, the Department must give the employee a reasonable amount of official time to review the Department's supporting evidence, and to furnish affidavits and other documentary evidence, if the employee is otherwise in an active duty status.

(d) The Department must designate an official to receive the employee's written and/or oral response. The official must have authority to make or recommend a final decision on the proposed adverse action.

(e) The employee may be represented by an attorney or other representative of the employee's choice and at the employee's expense, subject to paragraph (f) of this section. The employee must provide the Department with a written designation of his or her representative.

(f) The Department may disallow as an employee's representative—

(1) An individual whose activities as representative would cause a conflict between the interest or position of the representative and that of the Department,

(2) An employee of the Department whose release from his or her official position would give rise to unreasonable costs or whose work assignments preclude his or her release; or

(3) An individual whose activities as representative could compromise security.

(g)(1) An employee who wishes the Department to consider any medical condition that may be relevant to the proposed adverse action must provide medical documentation, as that term is defined at 5 CFR 339.104, during the opportunity to reply, whenever possible.

(2) When considering an employee's medical documentation, the Department may require or offer a medical examination pursuant to 5 CFR part 339, subpart C.

(3) When considering an employee's medical condition, the Department is not required to withdraw or delay a proposed adverse action. However, the Department must—

(i) Allow the employee to provide medical documentation during the opportunity to reply;

(ii) Comply with 29 CFR 1614.203 and relevant Equal Employment Opportunity Commission rules; and

(iii) Comply with 5 CFR 831.1205 when issuing a decision to remove.

§9701.611 Decision notice.

(a) In arriving at its decision on a proposed adverse action, the Department may not consider any reasons for the action other than those specified in the proposal notice.

(b) The Department must consider any response from the employee and the employee's representative, if the response is provided to the official designated under §9701.610(d) during the opportunity to reply, and any medical documentation furnished under §9701.610(g).

(c) The decision notice must specify in writing the reasons for the decision and advise the employee of any appeal or grievance rights under subparts E or G of this part.

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(d) The Department must deliver the notice to the employee on or before the effective date of the action.

§ 9701.612 Departmental record.

(a) *Document retention.* The Department must keep a record of all relevant documentation concerning the action for a period of time pursuant to the General Records Schedule and the Guide to Personnel Recordkeeping. The record must include the following:

- (1) A copy of the proposal notice;
- (2) The employee's written response, if any, to the proposal;
- (3) A summary of the employee's oral response, if any;
- (4) A copy of the decision notice; and
- (5) Any supporting material that is directly relevant and on which the action was substantially based.

(b) *Access to the record.* The Department must make the record available for review by the employee and furnish a copy of the record upon the employee's request or the request of the Merit Systems Protection Board or the MRP.

NATIONAL SECURITY

§ 9701.613 Suspension and removal.

(a) Notwithstanding other provisions of law or regulation, the Secretary may suspend an employee without pay when she or he considers suspension in the interests of national security. To the extent that the Secretary determines that the interests of national security permit, the suspended employee must be notified of the reasons for the suspension. Within 30 days after the notification, the suspended employee is entitled to submit to the official designated by the Secretary statements or affidavits to show why he or she should be restored to duty.

(b) Subject to paragraph (c) of this section, the Secretary may remove an employee suspended under this section when, after investigation and review as the Secretary considers necessary, the Secretary determines that removal is necessary or advisable in the interests of national security. The determination of the Secretary is final.

(c) An employee suspended under this section who has a permanent or indefinite appointment, has completed his or her initial service period, probationary

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period, or trial period, and is a citizen of the United States is entitled, after suspension and before removal, to—

(1) A written statement of the charges against the employee within 30 days after suspension, which may be amended within 30 days thereafter, and which must be stated as specifically as security considerations permit;

(2) An opportunity within 30 days thereafter, plus an additional 30 days if the charges are amended, to answer the charges and submit affidavits;

(3) A hearing, at the request of the employee, by a Department authority duly constituted for this purpose;

(4) A review of his or her case by the Secretary or designee, before a decision adverse to the employee is made final; and

(5) A written decision from the Secretary.

SAVINGS PROVISION

§ 9701.614 Savings provision.

This subpart does not apply to adverse actions proposed prior to the date of an affected employee's coverage under this subpart.

Subpart G—Appeals

EDITORIAL NOTE: At 73 FR 58435, Oct. 7, 2008, the application of subpart G to part 9701 was rescinded.

§ 9701.701 Purpose.

This subpart contains the regulations implementing the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 9701(a) through (c) and (f) concerning the Department's appeals system for certain adverse actions covered under subpart F of this part. These provisions require that the new appeals regulations provide Department employees fair treatment, are consistent with the protections of due process and, to the maximum extent practicable, provide for the expeditious handling of appeals.

§ 9701.702 Waivers.

When a specified category of employees is covered by an appeals system established under this subpart, the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 7701 are waived with respect to that category of employees to the extent they are inconsistent with the provisions of this subpart. The